

The Burkes Pass Heritage Trust Newsletter

May 2020



New Publication - 'On a Bronze Tussocked Terrace – The Burkes Pass Cemetery'

Liz Angelo-Roxborough, a long-time resident of Burkes Pass, became intrigued by the many stories when she wandered around the graves on a sunny day or was contacted by relatives of a loved one buried in the cemetery. Her resolve was to share a little of this information. Assisted by Jane Batchelor, this booklet 'On a Bronze Tussocked Terrace' has at last been published. It contains a brief history of Burkes Pass with little known Maori place names, and the history of the cemetery with stories, local poetry and photographs with a small selection of the people and the hardships encountered by those living and dying in this spectacular country.

One of them featured is Mr A.B. Smith of Rollesby Station, who donated the land for the cemetery in 1873 and his 19 year-old son, John, who died with a shepherd, Duncan Morrison, as a result of an avalanche on the Rollesby Range. Also, Eugenie Hayter, from Rollesby, has her own courageous and lively story of survival on the land as a widow with eight children and a large farm to run. Mountaineer Gary Ball, after his good friend Ken Joyce was buried there, wrote; "We sometimes stop at the Burkes Pass Cemetery to say hello. Other times we just sound the horn as we drive past because it is business as usual here". Gary's memorial now lies close by his friend.

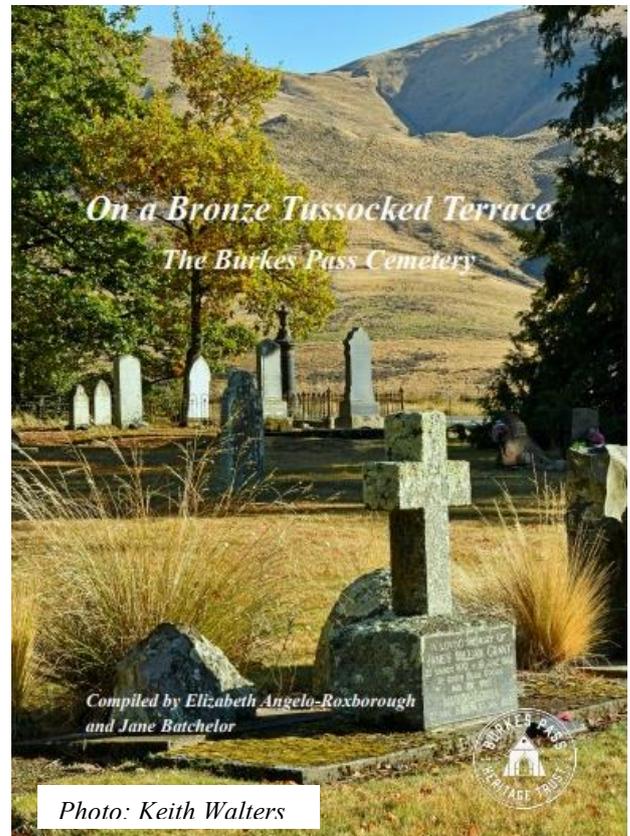


Photo: Keith Walters

The booklet is available for \$20 from the Burkes Pass Church, and from The Burkes Pass Heritage Trust by ordering from janelbatch@gmail.com or c/o 41 Kirkwood Avenue, Christchurch 8041. Postage is an extra \$5. Assistance with the cost of publication was gratefully received from the Mackenzie District Council.

Church Fence

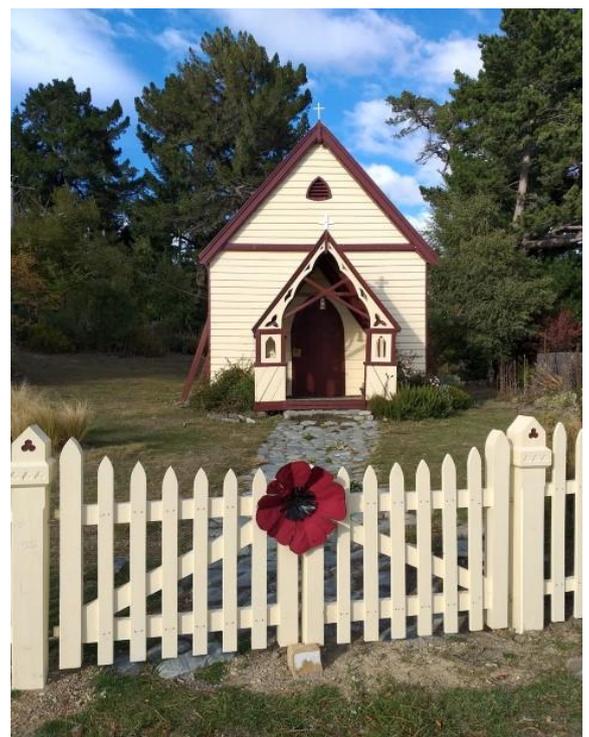
After many years of planning the new church fence got off to a great start in February this year. The Trust decided to replicate the original picket fence seen in an old 1800's photo in keeping with the architecture of the church. The gate posts are reproductions of the one original fence post at the cemetery. The wooden joinery was constructed by Graham and the gates were installed first with one span either side, a tricky business on a gentle slope and with the curved profile of the pickets. There is much more to be done to complete it. The Trust is grateful to the Mackenzie District Council for a grant from the Heritage Fund and also a donation from the late Winton Ballantyne for this project.

Anzac Day

Poppies appeared on the roadside and church gate in memory of those from this area who gave their lives in conflict.

Dornie Fire

Sadly a disastrous fire occurred in the Burkes Pass valley near Stanton Station after high winds in the area at the end of January. It caused devastation to farm animals and buildings, a plantation, and destroyed Dornie, a historic cob cottage. Max Willetts, who was brought up at Dornie, has recorded some wonderful memories of the place.



The Burkes Pass Hotel Carry Bags

A classic drawing of the hotel by former resident artist Shirley O'Connor, has been laser printed onto a convenient calico bag. The image features the Jubilee oak tree in its glory before lightning struck. A great gift for anyone who has fond memories and enjoyed refreshment there in the past. They are available from the church stall or the Trust – details as above.



Brief Update

- **Firewood fundraiser** – dry pine and clean burning poplar. Ph Graham for details 027 391 6273
- **Annis cob repair** and plastering of exterior walls continues.
- **Alma cottage** has had EQ strengthening completed, 2 yearly clay /manure wash over the cob walls, painting, water wheel overhaul and more native plantings during lockdown.
- **Successful predator trapping** in the native bush area this year so far; 5 ferrets, 4 rats, 2 hedgehogs and a stoat.
- **Highfield** has had drains cleared, regular mowing, and a recent measure up to complete guttering.
- **Sept working bee** Many willow branches leaning over the heritage walk were cut and native planting was extended
- **The Church and Musterer's Hut** have reopened.



Mike Bunckenbug

The Pandemic 100 Years Ago

Soldiers who survived the horrors of WW1 returned to New Zealand just as the war finished in 1918, to find their loved ones killed by an invisible enemy, the 'Spanish' flu. So called, as it was widely publicised when caught by the Spanish King. Ironically the celebrations of Armistice helped spread the second wave of this virulent virus. One of the few memorials to the nearly 9,000 victims is a statue in Waimate of Dr Margaret Cruikshank, who died in the pandemic just 4 years after starting practice as NZ's first female GP. In South Canterbury, just over 200 people died and it was particularly devastating to Maori. Good nursing, fluids and aspirin for fever control helped many survive however desperation drove unhelpful or dangerous remedies such as inhalation of zinc sulphate or when that supply ran out formalin was tried, and some took up smoking as 'fumigation protection'. Good leadership and communities working together was the key to surviving and coping with that devastating crisis just as it is today.



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On-line donations can be made to bank account 03 1718 0030625 00. Put your name in the reference box. Send an email with your address if you require a tax deductible receipt.